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The shootings of Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, D-Ariz., and nineteen others on Saturday in Tucson, Arizona has put some lawmakers on high alert and forced them to think twice about their comings and goings with the public.

But since it is the public who voted them into office, and it is the public they represent in Washington, congressional members now find themselves caught in a conundrum; should they continue to interact with constituents or be carefully cautious of them?

Rep. Betty McCollum, D-Minn., plans to continue to interacting with her constituents.

As a way to pay tribute to Congresswoman Giffords and the other victims of the vicious attack, she's holding open office hours and inviting the public to come in and register its "messages of support, solidarity and condolences". Those condolences can placed in the official Congressional Registry.

"The shooting [Saturday] in Tucson of Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, at least one member of her staff, and a number of citizens is a monstrous act of violence that is senseless and tragic," McCollum said in a statement on her website. "I am praying for Congresswoman Giffords, her staff members, all the victims of this attack, and their families."

McCollum insists she is being appropriately cautious and not acting out of haste and emotion when opening her office's doors. "My office will continue to use smart security steps with those coming through the door, but also we always try to make our office welcoming," she said in a phone interview with FOX News.

The Minnesota representative says she doesn't want to get to a point where security prevents constituents from being part of the political process, and she worries that Saturday's tragedy may end up making people more fearful of attending public events with their congressional representatives. "I'm afraid of the chilling effect it will have on people being able to openly participate in our democracy, she said."

In the last year and half, McCollum says, she's seen more of the type of violent language and

behavior that might have led to the incident in Arizona, especially at town hall meetings. "I've noticed a great deal more use of violent language, more people being bullying and trying to intimidate others trying to state their opinion".

McCollum didn't want to elaborate on why she felt there had been more of it in the last year and a half, as opposed to five or ten years ago, but said, "I think it's a shared responsibility of the media and elected officials...I think lawmakers should be respectful in the way we address one another and the way we talk about the work we do and set a tone of civility."

But she says she won't allow the events in Tucson to affect her work. "I'm not going to change how I conduct myself in public" she said.

Monday's open office hours may be proof it won't.